

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY  
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**FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

**LS 6331**

**BILL NUMBER:** SB 421

**NOTE PREPARED:** May 1, 2013

**BILL AMENDED:** Apr 8, 2013

**SUBJECT:** School Bus Safety Belts.

**FIRST AUTHOR:** Sen. Rogers

**FIRST SPONSOR:** Rep. Soliday

**BILL STATUS:** Enrolled

**FUNDS AFFECTED:** ☒ **GENERAL**  
**DEDICATED**  
**FEDERAL**

**IMPACT:** State & Local

**Summary of Legislation:** *State School Bus Committee:* This bill requires the state school bus committee (committee) to have a regular meeting once each quarter (current law requires a meeting each month).

*Safety Belts:* The bill requires the committee to adopt and enforce rules to require that a school bus driver operating a school bus equipped with safety belts does the following at least once a semester: (1) provide instruction to the passengers on the school bus on the proper fastening of the safety belt about the passenger's body; and (2) conduct a passenger evacuation drill. It provides that the failure to provide the instruction or conduct the drill subjects: (1) an employee of a school corporation to removal from employment; and (2) a person operating a school bus under contract to cancellation of the contract.

*Public Hearing:* The bill provides that before a governing body may purchase a school bus equipped with safety belts, the governing body must conduct a public hearing to explain why the governing body is purchasing the school bus rather than using the purchase money for other student safety measures.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2013.

**Explanation of State Expenditures:** *State School Bus Committee:* There would be no fiscal impact because of this change as committee members do not currently receive per diem or reimbursement for travel expenses.

*Safety Belts:* The fiscal impact would be minimal. Under current law, school children riding in a school bus are not required to wear safety belts. This bill requires the State School Bus Committee to adopt and enforce rules that would require a school bus driver operating a school bus equipped with safety belts to instruct the

passengers at least once a semester on the proper use of the seat belts. Additionally, school bus drivers would have to conduct an emergency passenger evacuation drill at least once a semester. Failure to do so would be grounds for dismissal, or cancellation of the contract if the employee is an independent contractor.

**Explanation of State Revenues:**

**Explanation of Local Expenditures:** *Safety Belts:* There would be little cost associated with implementing this proposal for those school corporations that have buses equipped with safety belts.

*Public Hearing:* Holding a public hearing to discuss the purchase of a school bus with safety belts likely will not have a fiscal impact, especially if this item is discussed at a regularly scheduled meeting a school board.

*Background-Safety Belts:* Several school corporations currently have buses equipped with safety belts. One school corporation indicated that it decided to have seat belts installed on new buses because of safety concerns. The cost per bus is approximately \$10,000. The corporation indicated that evacuation drills are performed twice a year. Parents are notified of the drills.

**Explanation of Local Revenues:**

**State Agencies Affected:** State School Bus Committee.

**Local Agencies Affected:** School corporations.

**Information Sources:** Karen Wetherald, Transportation Manager, Bartholomew Consolidated School Corporation, 812-376-4246.

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